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Culture of peace

Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

Promotion and protection of human rights

Security Council
Seventieth year

Letter dated 17 April 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon the instructions of my Government, I enclose herewith the Pan-Armenian Declaration on the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide (see annex). The Declaration was adopted on 29 January 2015 at a session of the State Commission on the Coordination of Events Dedicated to the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, with the participation of over 50 regional centennial committees from around the world. Later that day, President Serzh Sargsyan read the full text of the Declaration during a sombre wreath-laying ceremony at the Armenian Genocide Memorial Complex in Yerevan.

2015 marks the centennial of the Armenian genocide. People in all continents will unite to pay homage to the victims of one of the worst atrocities in human history. The Declaration reflects the collective voice of our people, from Armenia and the diaspora, who against the horrors of the genocide, survived, rose up from the edge of annihilation, restored their lives, preserved their identity in their new host societies, re-established their long lost statehood and raised their flag in the United Nations. It represents a point of departure in the process of restoring individual, communal and pan-Armenian rights and legitimate interests.

In commemorating the 100th anniversary of the genocide perpetrated against Armenians, we reflect deeply on the past, current and future challenges before humanity. Every single atrocity, past or present, is an affront to the whole of humanity, a common concern and a call for a collective responsibility and action. The Declaration reiterates the commitment of Armenia and the Armenian people to continue the international struggle for the prevention of genocides. It is our moral obligation before the world to combat this scourge. Armenia has been consistently contributing to the efforts of the international community to advance the prevention of genocide at the international level. As you know, in March 2015, the Human

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Rights Council adopted a renewed resolution on the prevention of genocide, sponsored by Armenia, which contains important references to new mechanisms and frameworks for prevention (see Human Rights Council resolution 28/34).

The Declaration is also forward-looking in that it underlines our hope for the recognition and condemnation of the Armenian genocide by Turkey, which will serve as a starting point for the historical reconciliation of the Armenian and Turkish peoples. We strongly believe that the secure future of humanity, peaceful coexistence, tolerance and reconciliation between nations will be reinforced by the acknowledgement of the past.

I request that the present letter and its annex be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 14, 66 and 68, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Zohrab **Mnatsakanyan**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex to the letter dated 17 April 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Pan-Armenian Declaration on the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide

The State Commission on the Coordination of Events Dedicated to the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, in consultation with its regional committees in the diaspora,

Expressing the united will of the Armenian people,

Based on the Declaration of Independence of Armenia of 23 August 1990 and the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia,

Recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948, whereby recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Guided by the respective principles and provisions of General Assembly resolution 96 (I) of 11 December 1946, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 9 December 1948, the Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity of 26 November 1968 and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 16 December 1966, as well as all the other international documents on human rights,

Taking into consideration that while adopting the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, the United Nations specifically underlined the importance of international cooperation in the struggle against that criminal offence,

Emphasizing the inadmissibility of impunity for the constituent elements of the crime of genocide and the non-applicability of statutory limitations thereto,

Condemning the genocidal acts against the Armenian people, planned and continuously perpetrated by the Ottoman Empire and various regimes of Turkey from 1894 to 1923, dispossession of the homeland, the massacres and ethnic cleansing aimed at the extermination of the Armenian population, the destruction of Armenian heritage, as well as the denial of the genocide, all attempts to avoid responsibility, to consign to oblivion the committed crimes and their consequences or to justify them, as a continuation of this crime and encouragement to commit new genocides,

Also considering the 1919-1921 verdicts of the courts martial of the Ottoman Empire on that grave crime perpetrated "against the law and humanity" as a legal assessment of the fact,

Appreciating the joint declaration of the Allied Powers on 24 May 1915, for the first time in history defining the most heinous crime perpetrated against the Armenian people as a "crime against humanity and civilization" and emphasizing the necessity of holding Ottoman authorities responsible, as well as the role and significance of the Treaty of Peace with Turkey, signed at Sèvres on 10 August 1920, and the Arbitral Award of the President of the United States of America,

Woodrow Wilson, of 22 November 1920, in overcoming the consequences of the Armenian genocide:

1. Commemorates one and a half million innocent victims of the Armenian genocide and bows in gratitude before those martyred and surviving heroes who struggled for their lives and human dignity.

2. Reiterates the commitment of Armenia and the Armenian people to continue the international struggle for the prevention of genocides, the restoration of the rights of people subjected to genocide and the establishment of historical justice.

3. Expresses gratitude to those States and international, religious and non-governmental organizations that had the political courage to recognize and condemn the Armenian genocide as a heinous crime against humanity and even today continue to undertake legal measures to that end, also preventing the dangerous manifestations of denialism.

4. Expresses gratitude to those nations, institutions and individuals, who, often endangering their lives, provided multifaceted humanitarian assistance and rescued many Armenians facing the threat of total annihilation, created safe and peaceful conditions for the survivors of the Armenian genocide, thus promoting orphan care and the international Armenophile movement.

5. Appeals to States Members of the United Nations, international organizations, all people of goodwill, regardless of their ethnic origin and religious affiliation, to unite their efforts aimed at restoring historical justice and paying tribute to the memory of the victims of the Armenian genocide.

6. Expresses the united will of Armenia and the Armenian people to achieve worldwide recognition of the Armenian genocide and the elimination of the consequences of the genocide, preparing to this end a file of legal claims as a point of departure in the process of restoring individual, communal and pan-Armenian rights and legitimate interests.

7. Condemns the illegal blockade of the Republic of Armenia imposed by the Republic of Turkey, its anti-Armenian stance in international forums and the imposition of preconditions in the normalization of inter-State relations, considering this a consequence of the continued impunity for the Armenian genocide, *Meds Yeghern*.

8. Calls upon the Republic of Turkey to recognize and condemn the Armenian genocide committed by the Ottoman Empire, and to face its own history and memory through commemorating the victims of that heinous crime against humanity and renouncing the policy of falsification, denialism and banalizations of this indisputable fact. Supports those segments of Turkish civil society whose representatives nowadays dare to speak out against the official position of the authorities.

9. Expresses the hope that recognition and condemnation of the Armenian genocide by Turkey will serve as a starting point for the historical reconciliation of the Armenian and Turkish peoples.

10. Proudly notes that during the past century the Armenian people, having survived the genocide,

- Demonstrated an unbending will and national consciousness and restored its sovereign statehood, lost centuries ago,
- Preserved and developed national values, achieved the renaissance of their national culture, science and education, bringing their unique contribution to the development of world heritage,
- Established a powerful and effective network of religious and secular institutions in the Armenian diaspora, thus contributing to the preservation of their Armenian identity in Armenian communities worldwide, the shaping of a respected and esteemed image of the Armenians and the protection of the legitimate rights of the Armenian people,
- United and restored the national gene pool that was facing extermination as a result of the genocide, through a pan-Armenian cooperation and extensive repatriation programme,
- Made its valuable contribution to international peace and security during the First and the Second World Wars and won glorious victories in the heroic battle of Sardarapat and the Artsakh war.

11. Considers the 100th anniversary of the Armenian genocide an important milestone in the ongoing struggle for historical justice, under the motto "I remember and demand".

12. Calls upon the coming generations of Armenians to protect their sacred native heritage with patriotism, consciousness and intellect and resolutely struggle and serve for:

- A stronger homeland, free and democratic Republic of Armenia,
- The progress and strengthening of independent Artsakh,
- The efficient unity of Armenians worldwide,
- The realization of the centuries-old sacrosanct goals of all Armenians.